

## ***Dear Praying Friends...***

Greetings from Japan! Remembering our son running off the plane when we first arrived in Japan (age 2), and seeing him now (age 14), crystalizes for me **12 years of God's faithfulness to us in ministry here**. We are so grateful to YOU as well for your faithful support and prayer for this church planting work during these past 12 years. The vision and burden for reaching the people of Japan with the gospel has grown stronger each year. Pray for us. WE DESPERATELY NEED your regular ministry of prayer for us.

### **1. Spiritual Ground Zero**

In our last email, we shared how God is at work in the lives of three new believers at Denen Grace Chapel. One young woman, **Em-san**, has been eagerly preparing for baptism with us for the last few months. She had gotten to the point of preparing the final draft of her testimony. I reserved the Japanese public bath behind our church location for Sunday, 9/19, for the baptism. However, she contacted us the other day and asked to put her baptism on hold. She is filled with fear concerning her family's reaction. She did not come to church this past Sunday and has not responded to our attempt to contact her.

Although this is our first baptism candidate to have struggled so deeply, it happens frequently in the church in Japan. There is intense social pressure on new believers in Japan. Many waver. Each new believer is a hard fought spiritual battle. We believe the planting of this church, Denen Grace Chapel, in one of the most unreached countries of the world is spiritual ground zero. And this is why we covet your prayer support of ourselves and this ministry. Would you pray that Em-san would get in touch with us this week. Ask God to intervene in her family and give her boldness and faith to move forward.

### **2. UPS and DOWNS**

The above reflects the ups and downs of ministry. But there are more ups and downs these days. **The temperature is up, way up, in Japan**, and has remained so for a long time. This has been the hottest summer in 117 years! With the humidity well over 60%, it has been a very uncomfortable few months. PRAY for health and strength in ministry and daily life through the heat.

Meanwhile, **the dollar is down, way down in Japan**. We grumbled when it hit 110 last year, we worried when it hit 100, we panicked when it hit 90. Now it is at 83 to the dollar. It's past time to pray. As our missionary work here is supported by the dollar, this has a tremendous impact on American missions in Japan in general, and our own support in specific. We see the yen spike now and then, but the dollar has never been so deflated for so long. Please remember this in prayer.

### **3. Keep praying for Denen**

**Grace C.A.F.E.:** We have begun a Sunday afternoon English outreach once monthly. We call it **Grace C.A.F.E.** (**Christ And Friends in English**). There's good coffee, but it's really about the great gospel. Our second service was this past Sunday. We sing in English, I give a simple message in English, and we have breakout group discussion in English. We would like to turn this into a weekly service next year. We know what our target group is for this service, and have had several new visitors already attend. Pray that God would use this CAFE as a way to reach more Japanese for Christ.

**SALVATION DECISIONS:** A middle-aged woman attending one of our small groups recently accepted Christ. PRAY that S-san would grow in her new faith and blend into church community. The combination of Bible and English continue to be a way we reach out, and God reaches into hearts of people. PRAY SPECIFICALLY for three seekers in my Tuesday English Bible Class to place faith in Christ. God is at work in their hearts.

### **RETURNEE MINISTRY:**

Pastor and Mrs. Kondo are moving forward in plans to begin a more active returnee ministry at Denen Grace Chapel. A core of people is developing to help them. An outreach is planned for this fall. More details later, but please PRAY that God would begin to bring even more returnees to our church, and to Himself.

**PARTNERSHIP WITH KONDOS:** We've just begun our partnership with Pastor and Mrs. Kondo after they were installed at the church in April. They are of great encouragement to us. Calling a national pastor is a BIG STEP for a young church plant. They will be bi-vocational until we can fully support them as a church. We have opened a special project with WorldVenture to subsidize his salary at these early stages.

### **4. Upcoming Stateside Visit: Vehicle Needed**

We'll be in the States and visiting with churches in the midwest and east coast for six weeks this fall. During our time in NY and NJ (Oct 18~Nov 8), we have housing, but **need a reliable vehicle** to get around locally. We'd prefer to avoid the cost of a rental car. Know of something? Contact us, or pray concerning our need for a vehicle during this time.

Once again, THANK YOU, our dear support team, for enabling us to serve God here on your behalf these past 12 years!

Together for the Harvest in Japan,  
Kevin and Kaori Laverman